

Want more?

Other guides available on Blackboard from Student Academic Support that you might find useful:

- Effective research.
- Checking your work.
- Referencing & avoiding plagiarism.

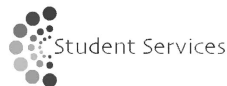
Online:

- **LearnHigher** is a great starting point, full of excellent resources to develop all aspects of your approach to learning - including printable timetables, coursework planners, and more.
<http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/students.htm>

At Abertay:

Visit Student Services on level 2 of the library, including:

- **English as a foreign language:**
Amanda Shaw - a.shaw@abertay.ac.uk.
- **Advice for disabled students:**
Claire Allan - c.allan@abertay.ac.uk.



Student Services

Student Academic Support

Find us on level 2 of the library.

Appointments available or drop by for quick questions,
Mondays to Fridays, 10am to 4pm.
Find us on Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr and Blackboard.
<http://www.abertay.ac.uk/studying/support/academic>



Student Academic Support

Putting things in your own words.

The main points

You will be told encouraged to develop your own writing style and to communicate ideas in their own words, not least to avoid plagiarism.

It can be easy sometimes, however, to copy unintentionally or to paraphrase only partially the original academic work you are referencing .

This guide will give you ideas and techniques to use when you are paraphrasing others' work to ensure you are really 'putting it in your own words'.

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Paraphrasing

When writing coursework you will be expected to summarise, analyse or evaluate other people's arguments or ideas. Putting it in your own words means that you read and understand the source material and then discuss or reorganize the text with your own vocabulary and reference this properly. This implies that putting someone else's ideas in your own words entails more than just changing a word or two. You should try to use different vocabulary, omit unimportant points and adapt the information to answer the coursework question.

Why put it all in your own words?

Putting it in your own words is an important part of understanding and learning the main ideas in your studies. Writing in this way helps you become an active rather than a passive learner. Paraphrasing other's ideas allows you to remember these concepts better and use them in different contexts. Simply copying other people's work and claiming it as your own is plagiarism.



When it seems impossible to phrase something differently...

Try, first, writing it in the simplest possible way imaginable, as though you were writing for someone who knew nothing about the subject. Then, take your very simple version and rewrite it a second time in a more appropriate academic style.

Some Useful Hints

There are some words you will have to copy, for example the name of a procedure or technical words used by everyone in your area of study.

To illustrate some point you can put someone else's words in quotes but quotations in a coursework should be kept to a minimum.

A coursework full of quotations gives the marker the impression that the writer is lazy (can't be bothered to put this in their own words) or does not fully understand the ideas being written about.

Checking that you have put it your own words.

Ensure that you write notes in your own words when accessing source material. This will make sure that you avoid accidentally copying the text word for word into your coursework.

Always check your work against the source material to satisfy yourself that you have not copied anything too closely. Students sometimes copy information that is difficult to understand, you can avoid this by discussing the ideas with fellow students or with your tutor.